

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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1. Name of Property

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historic name Evans, E. L. House

other names/site number DHR file Number 130-0006-0407

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2. Location

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street & number 1204 Washington Avenue not for publication N/A

city or town South Boston vicinity N/A

state Virginia code VA county Halifax code 083 zip code 24592

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Virginia Department of Historic Resources Date _____
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1, main house, but not the secondary resources are listed within the South Boston Historic District

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
roof Standing Seam Metal
walls Wood-Weatherboard
other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1892

Significant Dates 1892

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
☒ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Library of Virginia

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.7 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	687498	4063927	2	

___ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert C and Luanne T. Giles, Owners and Kristin Kirchen, Architectural Historian
organization _____ date January 7, 2008
street & number 1204 Washington Avenue telephone 434-572-3225
city or town South Boston state VA zip code 24592

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert C & Luanne T Giles
street & number 1204 Washington Avenue telephone 434-572-3225
city or town South Boston state VA zip code 24592

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions,

gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

**E.L. Evans House
Halifax, VA**

7. Description Summary and Site

Built in 1892, the E.L. Evans house rests on 1.7 acres in the southern portion of Halifax County, Virginia, in the Town of South Boston, facing east on a beautiful tree-lined street called Washington Avenue which is included in the South Boston Historic District. Behind the house, also facing east is a small building that was once the home of the cook. To the rear of the main lot are the remnants of a brick foundation for the ice house. Other houses on the block range in age from 1888 to the late 1950's but none are as highly decorated or demonstrate the quality of the E.L. Evans house. The Evans house was the first house in South Boston with central heat and also the first with a concrete sidewalk leading to the house.

Detailed Description

The E.L. Evans house is a beautiful, large two-story, balloon-frame High Victorian Queen Anne featuring numerous decorative elements popular at the time of construction in 1892. The brick foundation outlines an irregular footprint and the exuberance and variety of architectural embellishment almost defy description. The house features an irregular roofline with a side-gable-on-hip front section with a lower pitched hipped section off the rear and several smaller appendages off of that, all clad in standing seam metal. Two large decorative chimneys with pressed brick and terra cotta emerge from the center gabled section. There are three other brick chimneys located on various end walls, all more functional than decorative. Those walls not adorned with decorative shingles or brick are clad in beveled wood siding.

The front (east) façade is five bays wide with a projecting center gable holding cutaway bays on both the first and second stories, a three story tower on the northeast corner, and a curved, projecting gabled bay on the southeast corner. The second story of the front façade, including the tower and south corner bay, is clad with four different styles of patterned wood shingles, while the first stories of the tower and the corner bay have curving walls wrapped with painted brick. Pent roofs define each story of the tower and it is capped with a polygonal hipped roof with flared eaves underlain by a bracketed cornice. A pent roof also separates the first and second stories on the corner bay: a wide frieze of bull's-eye blocks runs beneath it. The central gable features more bull's-eye blocks while the projecting corner gable exhibits a stick work motif in the gable. Tall, narrow one-over-one, double-hung wood windows puncture this elevation. The primary entrance, located in the center projecting bay, has divided sidelights and a lead-camed, abstract-patterned stained glass above the arched double-door entry. A highly decorated, one story, partial width porch with turned posts, decorative brackets, spindle frieze, cut-out pattern woodwork and jig-sawn balustrades and a front gable with bulls-eye blocks highlights the front façade.

There are similarly exuberant porches on both the north and south side elevations, though each is unique. The three-bay porch on the north elevation features lattice work, four types of patterned shingles, a spindle frieze, a stick balustrade, and large elliptical arches defining the bays. The south porch is two bays wide with turned posts, a balustrade composed of jig-sawn panels, and delicate scroll brackets, and shelters a secondary entrance. At the back of the house, on the northwest corner, is a small two-bay porch with turned posts and spindle balustrades that is believed to have been used by the cook. Most of the windows on the side and rear elevations are double-hung two-over-two sash with the exception of the dining room windows which are tall, triple-hung, two-over-two sash that go to the floor. The top portion of each window is a lead-camed, stained glass with a shield design each with different colors. There are three windows on the north side that are two-over-two that also include small double doors at the bottom of each window so when the windows are raised access to the north porch is available. A two-story, polygonal bay is located on the south side elevation that again showcases four types of patterned shingles and applied jig-sawn decoration. A wide, bracketed cornice wraps around the front and both side elevations of the house.

The interior of the house is just as richly decorated as the exterior, showcasing a wide variety of finish techniques. The double doors at the main entrance are solid oak, intricately carved and identical to each other. There is a fixed transom with oak scroll work on each side above the inner doors and side panels in a ball and spindle pattern. The main hallway is 12 x 55 feet long and floored with multi-colored tile in a geometric pattern. Also in the hall is a 12-foot brick fireplace with terra cotta adornments. The main staircase is located approximately three-quarters of the way down the hall towards the rear with arched oak fretwork that entails stick and ball design and scroll work. The rest of the interior of the house features various types of wood including oak, maple, cherry, mahogany, walnut and pine. Interior doors are multi-paneled oak with original hardware. The door trim and tall

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**E.L. Evans House
Halifax, VA**

baseboard moldings throughout the house are oak, and each plinth block and rosette in every room is carved in a different design. Nine more fireplaces are located in each of the main rooms of the house. Eight are made of slate, some with elaborate wood mantels and original faux finishing, and others are hand-painted with intricate designs and depictions of animals. The ninth fireplace is in the dining room; it is made of oak and elaborately carved. Each fireplace retains the original tiles and hearths. There are three rooms that contain parquet floors, all different in patterns. The oak parquet floor in the informal parlor has an inlaid design medallion approximately 4 ½ feet x 5 ½ feet consisting of different woods. The music room, also with oak parquet, includes a border approximately eight inches wide with a geometrical design in maple, cherry and walnut. The dining room parquet contains four types of wood including maple, oak, cherry and walnut with a border approximately twelve inches wide in a geometric pattern with the same four woods. There is wainscoting in the dining room approximately three feet up in an alternating horizontal pattern of cherry and maple bordered with more geometric patterns of cherry, maple and oak and a chair rail made of cherry.

Two original gas lights that have been electrified hang from the ceiling in the dining room. All other lights in the home are original to the period but not original to the house. The second floor of the house consists of four bedrooms, three having heart of pine floors and one with tongue and groove oak flooring. There is oak fretwork with ball and spindle pattern at the end of the second floor hallway, which is also 12 x 55 feet long, and oak fretwork in a ball and spindle pattern that spans the area when you first come up the staircase. The interior of the house, like the exterior, contains workmanship of the highest quality with an original, un-altered floor plan.

The c.1892 10-foot by 12-foot dwelling that was the cook's house is located 26 feet off the west end of the house. In contrast to the architectural detail found on the main house, the cook's house is a simple, single story, one-room structure with a side gabled roof and an interior brick stovepipe chimney. It is square in plan and rests on a stone foundation. The walls are clad in beveled siding that matches the main house and the roof is clad in standing seam metal. The entrance door is located on the east elevation and a single window pierces the west elevation. The interior walls and ceiling are made of wainscoted pine. The floor is wood and original to the house.

At the rear of the property is a portion of the brick foundation for the former ice house. These remains and the corresponding depression are considered a contributing site on the property.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 3

**E.L. Evans House
Halifax, VA**

8. Statement of Significance Summary

The E.L. Evans house is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of architecture because it is the most intact and elaborate example of the Queen Anne architectural style in South Boston and probably all of Halifax County. The Evans House employs almost every architectural device in the book to avoid flat wall surfaces and takes advantage of every opportunity to showcase a different type of architectural embellishment. Mr. Evans' connection to the lumber business and the manufacture of mass produced building materials and decorative elements explains the varied architectural vocabulary of his house. The Evans House was not only his grand personal residence, it was also a very tangible advertisement for the variety of products that his business could provide to the style-conscious consumer. The house is in an excellent state of preservation and the original floor plan has never been altered. The period of significance is the date of construction, 1892.

Acknowledgements

Dr. J. Wayne Adams, Jr. of South Boston and Colt Evans of South Boston, both grandchildren of Mr. Evans provided assistance with the historic context found in Section 8.

Historic Background

The Evans family were prominent residents of Paoli, Chester County, Pennsylvania, and South Boston, Virginia. Joshua Evans Jr. was born in Paoli on January 20, 1777. He was a hotel keeper and farmer, and served one term in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives (1820) and two terms in the United States House of Representatives (1829-1833). He married Lydia Davis. She was the daughter of Dr. John Davis (1744-1816), and was born on February 2, 1778. She died shortly after the birth of their fifth child, on November 20, 1818. Joshua Evans, Jr. died in Paoli on October 2, 1846 and is buried in the Great Valley Baptist Church cemetery in New Centerville, Pennsylvania. His son, John D Evans, was born on October 18, 1814. He lived his entire life in Paoli, and took over the hotel business after his father died. He was also a farmer and a partner in the Columbia Manufacturing Company. He owned rental property in Philadelphia as well. John D. Evans never married. He died at his home in Paoli on June 6, 1884. His "adopted son" was Edward Livingston Evans. Born Edward Livingston on January 2, 1857, he was orphaned at a young age and resided in an orphanage in Philadelphia under the charge of John D. Evans' cousin Nathaniel Jones. Evans later assumed much of the expense for his care. Edward Livingston took the last name Evans around 1873. He later resided in Farmville, Virginia in the residence of Major Andrew R. Venable, Jr., and graduated from Hampden-Sydney College around 1880.

E.L. Evans married Mildred Blanton on April 22, 1884. They had ten children and resided in South Boston, Virginia where Mr. Evans was employed in various businesses including lumber, hardware, building materials and tobacco. He owned a hardware business with his partner, J. J. Owen of Prince Edward County, under the name of Evans and Owen Hardware, which was located in downtown South Boston. The brick building that housed this business is still located on Main Street and the front of the building is adorned with pressed brick and is marked "E. L. Evans 1888." Mr. Evans also owned a lumber mill in South Boston that was located on Seymour Street (no longer standing). Pre-printed letterhead for this business had a banner across the top that states, "South Boston Planing Mill, Edward. L Evans, Proprietor, Dressed Lumber of all Kinds, Sash, Blinds, Doors, Framing, Brackets, Moulding, & c & c." Receipts from the Planing Mill list all kinds of architectural materials bought and sold by the company including "moulding, terra cota, cornice, glass for shelves, sash, sash cord, sky light sash, transom lights, and brick."¹ E.L. Evans served as a town councilman and was mayor for two terms during the late 1880's and early 1890's. It was while he was a member of the town council, and largely through his influencing, that Main Street was paved with cobblestone and the town furnished with water for extinguishing fires. The advanced technology of paving Main Street with cobblestones was considered such an achievement that the project was written up in "Scientific American Magazine". He died at his home in South Boston on March 15, 1909.

Architectural Significance

The Town of South Boston prospered between the 1870's and the 1930's, rising to prominence on the strength of its tobacco and textile industries and its location on the Richmond and Danville Railroad. By 1907, South Boston had become the second largest

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**E.L. Evans House
Halifax, VA**

bright leaf tobacco market in the United States, and it retained this ranking up until the Great Depression.² The Town's wealth and prosperity is physically reflected in the commercial buildings and private residences constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries by and for the merchants and managers prospering from the local industries. The commercial core is dominated by mostly two story brick buildings featuring a variety of Italianate and Victorian decorative details, including patterned brickwork, cast iron cornices and arched window openings. One of the most prominent of these commercial buildings, and one of the oldest surviving, is the E.L. Evans Building on Main Street, which was built to house Mr. Evans' hardware business in 1888. The financial success of the tobacco and textile industries spawned a demand for new, stylish residences, and merchants like Mr. Evans, who dealt in raw lumber as well as manufactured building materials, positioned themselves to capitalize on this demand.

Between 1880 and 1900, the most sought after style in residential architecture was the Queen Anne. First popularized by a group of 19th century English architects, the style was imported and reinterpreted by American architects and builders, and spread throughout the country by pattern books and architectural magazines. Although the earliest American examples, dating to the 1870's, were of the half-timbered subtype, by the 1880's the fully American interpretation, known as the spindlework subtype, was employed more frequently. In addition to the publicity generated by pattern books and magazines, the quickly expanding railroad network made pre-cut architectural details, like scroll brackets, spindle friezes, and sawn ornaments, conveniently available wherever the rails led.³

The Queen Anne style is one of the most recognizable of American architectural styles, known by many for its "gingerbread" trim. The style is broken into four subtypes based on the dominant type of decoration used – spindlework, free classic, half-timbered, and patterned masonry. Generally, houses employ a majority of decorative elements of a single subtype. As the name suggests, the spindlework subtype employed delicate spindlework commonly found in porch friezes and balustrades, along with lace-like brackets, turned porch posts, and incised ornamentation. In addition to the decorative details, Queen Anne houses are recognized for their complex rooflines and varied wall planes featuring bay windows, towers, and variety of surface treatments. In South Boston, there are several other good examples of the Queen Anne style along Washington Avenue in the South Boston Historic District, however none of these exhibits the variety in decorative detailing found at the Evans House. In Halifax County as a whole, Sunnyview Farm is a good example of the Queen Anne style executed in brick and used in a rural setting, but it also lacks the variety of ornamentation shown on the Evans House.

Mr. Evans almost certainly catered to builders and clients designing and constructing Queen Anne residences, and South Boston's location on the railroad would have made it convenient to obtain whatever decorative details were in demand. Receipts from his planing mill confirm that his business dealt in a wide variety of architectural elements used in Queen Anne architecture. It seems likely that Mr. Evans chose to advertise his business in a unique way – through the design and construction of his own elaborate personal residence. Family tradition holds that Mr. Evans was both architect and builder for his house, though no drawings have been found to confirm this. Although typical for the Queen Anne style in overall form and type of ornamentation, the Evans House is atypical in the variety of decorative details utilized. The house showcases four different styles of wood shingles on the second story of the front façade and three porches each exhibiting different balustrades, friezes and brackets. On the interior, flooring includes colorful geometric tile in the main hall and three different styles of wood parquet in the first floor primary spaces. Every room features plinths and corner blocks carved in different designs and the house's nine fireplaces boast a variety of elaborate mantles featuring carving, faux finishing, and hand painting. No documentary evidence has been found to support the theory that Mr. Evans intended his house to be an advertisement for his business, but one of Mr. Evans' grandchildren reports that the construction of the house was a source of local fascination, and that checking on the progress of the house was the frequent objective of local carriage rides. Whether or not it was constructed as a live-in billboard, the E.L. Evans House clearly garnered much local attention when it was built, and it remains today, in largely original condition, an excellent example of the Queen Anne style and a tangible reminder of South Boston's prosperous past.

¹ Accounts and Receipts, 1869-1909, Evans Family Papers, 1709-1928. (Accession #39664, Personal Papers Collection, The Library of Virginia in Richmond, VA), Box 11, Folders 1-32.

² Division of Historic Landmarks Staff, South Boston Historic District, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Richmond, 1986), Section 8, Page 1.

³ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 268.

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Section 9, 10 Page 5

**E.L. Evans House
Halifax, VA**

9. Bibliographical Acknowledgements

Division of Historic Landmarks Staff, South Boston Historic District, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Richmond, VA: Division of Historic Landmarks, 1986.

Evans Family Papers, 1709-1928. Accession #39664, Personal Papers Collection, The Library of Virginia in Richmond, VA..

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.

10. Geographical References

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated parcel boundary includes the house and cooks house, the only buildings on the property, and a brick foundation, as well as the surrounding property referred to as tax parcel number 2836 with a legal description of (#1 Lot 6 155 x 297 ft and #2 PB21/127 Washington Avenue) and addressed as 1204 Washington Avenue in the town of South Boston, VA. Adjoining parcels are 2797 through 2801. Last legal reference was Deed Book 571, Page 397 (item 1).

Boundary Justification

The nominated parcel boundary includes all of the original parcels belonging to E.L. Evans.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Photographic Data Page 6

**E.L. Evans House
Halifax, VA**

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following is the same for all the photographs:

E.L. Evans House, South Boston, Halifax County, #130-0006-0407

Taken by John Wills in August 2007

Digital images stored at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources

- | | |
|----|--|
| 01 | Exterior - Front of home – facing West |
| 02 | Exterior - Northeast corner – facing Southwest |
| 03 | Exterior North porch – facing South |
| 04 | Exterior Southwest corner - facing Northeast |
| 05 | Exterior Cooks House – facing Southwest |
| 06 | Exterior Foundation of ice house – facing East |
| 07 | Exterior Rear of house – facing East |
| 08 | Interior Double Entry doors – facing East |
| 09 | Interior Main Hall – facing West |
| 10 | Interior Main Hall – facing East |
| 11 | Interior Hallway fireplace – facing Southeast |
| 12 | Interior Main Staircase – facing South |
| 13 | Interior Music Room door/window combination – facing North |
| 14 | Interior Music Room fireplace – facing Southeast |
| 15 | Interior Dining Room – facing North |